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IN MEMORY

OF

AMELIE AND MELANIE DEGRASSE,

DAUGHTERS OF

COUNT DEGRASSE,

THE RESTORATION OF THEIR TOMB,

BY

THE CITY COUNCIL, AND ITS DECORATION BY LADIES OF CHARLESTON,

ST. MARY'S CHURCH YARD,

October 19th, 1881.

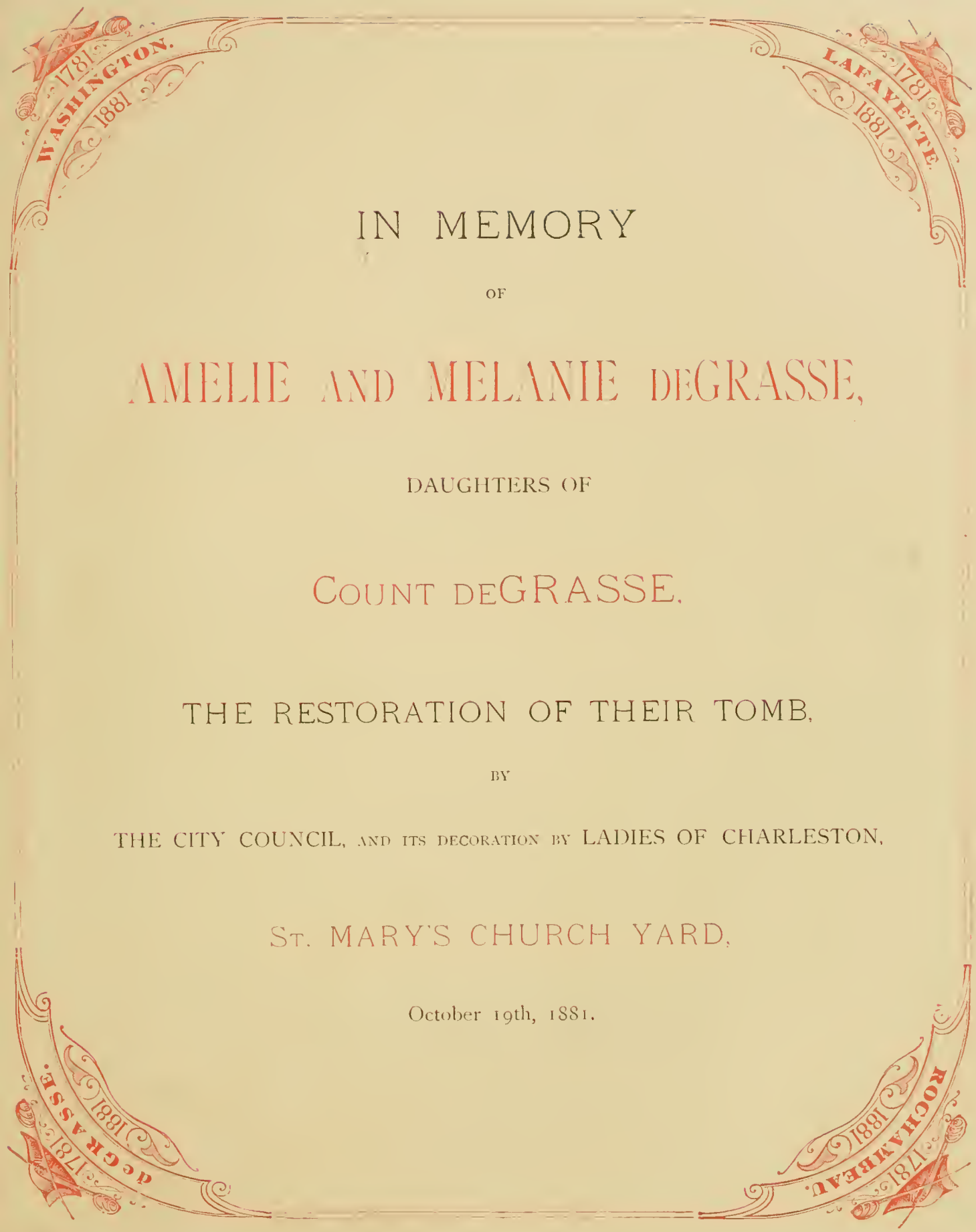
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With the Compliments of

Wm. P. Courtenay

Mayor.



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Presentation Copy,

For B. F. De Costa Esq.

1899

WASHINGTON. 1781 1881

LAFAYETTE. 1781 1881



The Yorktown Centennial.

The Commemoration of Admiral deGrasse in Charleston.

CHARLESTON'S PART IN THE CEREMONIES OF THE TIME IS TO commemorate, in a most touching way, the services of Admiral Count deGrasse, who commanded the French fleet at Yorktown, a hundred years ago. Two of the daughters of the gallant Admiral, refugees from Santo Domingo, died in this City, in 1799, and were buried in St. Mary's Churchyard. The purpose is to decorate their tomb, as a most becoming mark of the gratitude and love of this people.

THE tomb of the Demoiselles Amelie and Melanie deGrasse was found to be in a reasonably good condition. It was considered highly proper to repair, as far as possible, the injuries wrought by the winds and rains of more than four score years, and the Vestrymen of St. Mary's have superintended this kindly work, which will be finished to-day. A Committee of Ladies are preparing arches to surmount the tomb. These arches will be adorned with evergreens, flowers, and the silvery Southern moss. The co-operation of the ladies of Charleston in general is desired, and contributions of flowers, wreaths, crosses and small hanging baskets, will be received at St. Mary's Church, between the hours of 7 and 9, on Wednesday morning. The gates of the Cemetery will be open to the public from 10 30 A. M. to 5 P. M. on Wednesday, so as to enable those interested to visit the hallowed spot.

IN years past the descendants of the Admiral Count deGrasse, while travelling in the United States, have made pilgrimages to the tomb of the fair young gentlewomen of their family, and it is presumed that the Count deGrasse, who, under the instructions of his Government, represents his heroic ancestor at Yorktown, will desire to extend his journey as far as this City. It will be a gratification to Charleston if he can do so, and Mayor Courtenay has accordingly addressed to him the following letter:

deGRASSE. 1781 1881

ROCHAMBEAU. 1781 1881

CITY OF CHARLESTON,

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, October 15, 1881.

The Count deGrasse, of France, and friends, Yorktown, Virginia:

GENTLEMEN: In behalf of the City Council and people of Charleston, I have the honor to address you, as the representatives of the Count deGrasse, the companion in-arms and friend of Washington. At the close of the Century you visit our shores, to unite with the President and citizens of our wide-spreading Republic, in the Centennial Celebration of the victory of Yorktown, in which your ancestor bore a conspicuous and honored part. I beg most respectfully to tender to you the assurance of the great pleasure felt by the people of Charleston in your visit at this time to America, and trust it will serve to perpetuate the bonds of amity so long existing between France and the United States. It is known to you that the son of Admiral Count deGrasse resided for some time in Charleston, and that the remains of two of his sisters repose in the Cemetery of St. Mary's Church, in our city. It will interest you to learn that it is the intention of the ladies of Charleston to specially honor the Centennial day you will celebrate in Virginia, on the 19th, by decorating their tomb with floral offerings from the private gardens of our citizens, in recognition of the gallant services of the father one hundred years ago, and of affection for the memory of his children, whose brief residence among us and early death are now recalled with mingled pleasure and regret. It may be your desire to visit Charleston, as the city where the son of the Admiral Count deGrasse once lived, and where the Demoiselles Amelie and Melanie deGrasse died, as I have mentioned. I express the feelings of our people when I indulge the hope that you will make it convenient to come to Charleston, and it affords me pleasure to invite you to do so as the guests of this municipality.

I AVAIL myself of the courteous attention of General DeSaussure, President of the State Society of the Cincinnati of South Carolina, Captain Marshall, of the Washington Light Infantry, and Captain Schachte, of the Fusiliers, in attendance upon the ceremonies at Yorktown, from our city, for the delivery of this communication, and the opportunity of personally assuring you of our highest esteem and consideration.

I am, gentlemen, very faithfully yours,

WM. A. COURTENAY, *Mayor.*

THIS is as it should be. The invitation is well conceived, and will meet with public approval. There is, indeed, in the whole programme for the Yorktown Centennial, no incident so pathetic, to our mind, as the commemoration of the Admiral deGrasse through his dead children. It touches a chord that the pomp and pride at Yorktown will not reach. The children to whom Admiral deGrasse gave his last thought have lain nigh a century dead, but when the name of their sire is on every tongue, and the guns thunder their salute, their hearts will hear it and beat,

——Start and tremble under our feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

[*News and Courier, October 17th, 1881.*

The Count deGrasse was not able to visit Charleston on account of Official Engagements.



THE TOMB OF DEMOISELLES DE GRASSE, ST. MARY CHURCH-YARD, CHARLESTON, S. C.
AS DECORATED BY THE LADIES, OCT. 19TH, 1881.

Near the Southwest Corner of St. Mary's Church, Hasel Street, is the Tomb of the Two Daughters of the Count deGrasse. The white marble Slab bears this inscription:

UNDERNEATH LIES INTERRED

THE BODIES OF

D'LLE AMELIE MAXIME ROSALIE

deGRASSE,

DECEASED ON THE 23D DAY OF AUGUST, 1799,

AND OF

D'LLE MELANIE VERONIQUE MAXIME

deGRASSE,

DECEASED ON THE 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1799,

DAUGHTERS TO THE LATE

FRANCIS JOSEPH PAUL, COUNT deGRASSE,

MARQUIS DE TILLY

OF THE FORMER

COUNTS OF PROVENCE AND SOVEREIGN PRINCES

OF ANTIBES,

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL OF THE NAVAL ARMY OF

HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY,

COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL ORDER OF ST. LOUIS,

A MEMBER OF THE MILITARY SOCIETY OF

CINCINNATI.

At the head of the Tomb, a Coronet is displayed, surmounting a Shield, bearing the arms of the family. Below, is a Cross, and the initials I. H. S.

In Memoriam---deGrasse.

IN the quiet Cemetery of St Mary's Catholic Church, in Hasel Street, a touching tribute was paid to the memory of Demoiselles Amelie and Melanie deGrasse, daughters of the brave French Admiral, Count deGrasse, who unsheathed his sword in behalf of the struggling Colonies, and risked his life for American Independence. At the head of their tomb a solitary sentinel stood guard through the day, while thousands of ladies and gentlemen, embracing many of the most distinguished persons in the city, visited the grave. Over the tomb was erected a catafalque of very graceful design, covered with gray moss and ivy, the four supporting pillars being constructed of twining evergreens. Surmounting the canopy was a crown, and over the head of the tomb a cross and wreath of white immortelles, which were contributed by the Lafayette Artillery. Suspended from each corner of the canopy was a hanging basket of moss and roses and trailing vines.

STANDING on the marble slab at the head of the grave was a basket of ferns and autumn leaves, artistically arranged, surmounted by two tiny flags, the colors of France and America, and beneath them a card, bearing the inscription: "Boston Souvenir, 1781—1881." This beautiful tribute was contributed by Miss Lalou, who brought it from Boston. Placed in the centre of the slab was a large oval basket, tied at each end with red, white and blue ribbons, and filled with the richest flowers of autumn, arranged with charming taste, and exhaling a wealth of perfume. This was contributed by Mons. Paul Dejardin, the French Consul at this Port. Below these were two bouquets of beautiful roses, contributed by Misses Clementine and Marie Guillemin. The tomb seemed to rest upon an embankment of gray moss, which was profusely strewn with roses, dahlias, pinks and scarlet berries, the richest treasures of the conservatory and the garden. Among those who contributed the floral offerings were Mrs. J. A. Cay, Mrs. D. M. O'Driscoll, Mrs. Antoine Riols, Mrs. F. P. Salas, Mrs. E. Fourgeaud, Mrs. G. Follin, Mrs. G. W. Aimar, Mrs. Barrett, and others.

THE most striking decoration was a magnificent American shield, of Parisian make, exquisitely woven of red, white and blue immortelles, contributed by the Washington Light Infantry. This shield was suspended over the centre of the tomb from the apex of the catafalque. In the blue ground of the shield were placed thirteen little bunches of white immortelles, representing the thirteen stars of the thirteen States. The edges of the shield were illuminated with a border of golden immortelles, the whole an elaborate piece of exquisite workmanship.

THE construction of the catafalque and the arrangement of the floral offerings were superintended by Mr. S. Webb, the Charleston florist.

THE Cemetery of St. Mary's will be kept open to the public to-day and to-morrow, in order to give any citizens who may not have seen the decorations yesterday the opportunity of visiting the tomb.—*News and Courier, October 20th, 1881.*

THE YORKTOWN CENTENNIAL ODE.

By PAUL H. HAYNE, of South Carolina.

I.

HARK! hark! down the century's long reaching slope,
To those transports of triumph—those raptures of hope!
The voices of Main and of Mountain combined,
In glad resonance borne on the wings of the wind;
The bass of the drum, and the trumpet that thrills
Through the multiplied echoes of jubilant hills!
And mark! how the years, melting upward like mist,
Which the breath of some splendid enchantment has kissed,
Reveal on the ocean, reveal on the shore,
The proud pageant of conquest that graced them of yore.

Chorus—
Where blended forever in love as in fame,
See! the standard which stole from the starlight its flame,
And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,
The fair lilies, the luminous lilies of France

II.

OH! stubborn the strife, ere the conflict was won!
And wild, whirling war-wrack half stifled the sun;
The thunders of cannon that boomed on the lea
But re-echoed far thunders pealed up from the sea—
Where guarding his sea lists—a knight on the waves—
Bold deGrasse kept at bay the bluff bulldogs of Graves—
The day turned to darkness, the night changed to fire,
Still more fierce waxed the combat, more deadly the ire—
Undimmed by the gloom, in majestic advance,
Ah! behold where they ride, o'er the red battle-tide.

Chorus—
Those banners united in love as in fame—
The brave standard which drew from the starbeams their flame,
And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,
The fair lilies, the luminous lilies of France!

III.

NO respite! No pause! By the York's tortured flood
The gray lion of England is writhing in blood!
Cornwallis may chafe, and coarse Tarleton aver—
As he sharpens his broadsword and buckles his spur—
"This blade, which so oft has reaped rebels like grain,
Shall now harvest, for death, the rude yeoman again."
Vain boast! for ere sun set he's flying in fear,
With the rebels he scouted close, close in the rear!
The French on his flank hurled such volleys of shot
That e'en Gloucester's redoubt must be growing too hot.

Chorus—
Thus wedded in love as united in fame,
Lo! the standard that stole from the starlight its flame—
And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,
The fair lilies, the luminous lilies of France!

IV.

O morning superb! when the siege reached its close!
See! the sundawn outbloom like the alchemist's rose!
The last wreaths of smoke from dim trenches upcurled
Are transformed to a glory that smiles on the world.
Joy! Joy! Save the wan, wasted front of the foe,
With his battleflags furled and his arms trailing low.
Respect for the brave! In grim silence they yield,
And in silence they pass with bowed heads from the field.
Then triumph transcendent! So Titan of tone
That some vowed it must startle King George on his throne!

Chorus—
O! wedded in love, as united in fame,
See! the standard that stole from the starlight its flame—
And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,
The fair lilies, the luminous lilies of France!

V.

WHEN Peace to her own timed the pulse of the land,
And the war weapon sunk from the war wearied hand,
Young Freedom, unborne to the heighth of the goal—
She had yearned for so long, with deep travail of soul—
A song of her future raised, thrilling and clear,
Till the woods leaned to harken, the hill slopes to hear—
Yet! fraught with all magical grandeurs that gleam,
On the hero's high hope, or the patriot's dream.
What future, tho' bright, in cold shadow shall cast
The stern beauty that haloes the brow of the Past?

Chorus—
O! wedded in love as united in fame!
See! the standard that stole from the starlight its flame,
And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,
The fair lilies, the luminous lilies of France!





50 COPIES PRIVATELY PRINTED FOR MAYOR COURTENAY, AND 50 COPIES FOR THE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA BY WALKER, EVANS & COGSWELL, CHARLESTON, S. C.





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